



## Toy Safety Nothing to Play Around With

**Release Date:** November 26, 2014

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MADISON – In the rush to pick up the hottest toys for the kids on their lists, shoppers may not stop to consider the appropriateness of a particular gift for the intended child. The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection asks consumers to put safety first when shopping for kids this holiday season.

“Many shoppers will jump at a chance to pick up the season’s hottest toys if they are in stock, but a toy’s popularity should not be the guiding factor in gift giving for children,” said Michelle Reinen, Director of the Bureau of Consumer Protection. “The child’s development and the age of other children in the family needs to be considered when judging a toy’s appropriateness within a household setting.”

When you are circling the store aisles or shopping online for gifts, look for the following labels on the toy packaging or on the product page:

- General warning labels listing the potential for small parts, magnets, suffocation hazards, etc.
- Age grading: use the manufacturer’s suggested age range as a foundation for whether a toy is appropriate for the physical and mental skills of a child.
- All toys: “ASTM F963” – this label indicates that a toy meets the latest toy safety standards. All toys sold in the U.S. must meet this standard. ASTM F963 includes guidelines and test methods to prevent injuries from choking, sharp edges and other potential hazards.
- Art materials: “ASTM D4236” – this label indicates that art materials have been reviewed by a toxicologist and are labeled with cautionary information, if necessary.
- Toys with fabrics: “Flame resistant” – this label means that a material will resist burning and should extinguish quickly once removed from an ignition source.

Some things to think about when shopping for gifts for children:

- For homes with younger children, avoid toys with small parts, magnets, cords or strings.
- Choose gifts that are both age and skill appropriate for the child.
- Check for recalled toys at the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission’s website: [www.CPSC.gov](http://www.CPSC.gov)
- Avoid no-name products. A manufacturer’s name and address is not a guarantee of safety, but it means you can track down a legitimate company to remedy problems.
- Pick up any safety items that go along with a toy such as a helmet for a bike or scooter.
- Make sure that art supplies such as crayons, markers or paints are labeled as non-toxic.
- Look for hidden dangers such as sharp points, loud noises or projectiles.
- If you are purchasing wooden toys, look for splinters or sharp edges.
- If you are purchasing used toys, skip ones with chipped paint in order to avoid possible exposure to lead.

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After the gifts are unwrapped, immediately gather and remove plastic wrapping, twist ties, zip ties, clamshell containers and other potentially dangerous toy packaging materials. Be mindful of younger children and keep small or pointed toys and accessories out of their reach. Lastly, make sure to read any battery charging instructions that come with toys as chargers and adapters can overheat and pose burn hazards to young children.

For additional information or to file a complaint, visit the Consumer Protection Bureau at [datcp.wisconsin.gov](http://datcp.wisconsin.gov), call the Consumer Information Hotline at 800-422-7128 or send an e-mail to [datcph hotline@wisconsin.gov](mailto:datcph hotline@wisconsin.gov).

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